

Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Wednesday, November 23, 2016

We are sending this week's Field Memo ahead of schedule, as schools are closed for the rest of the week. We wish each of you a safe and happy Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends! – Ken

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. Education Secretary King urges states to end use of [corporal punishment](#) in schools

From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE)

2. RIDE to [survey](#) students, staff, families during current school year; RIDE seeks input from teachers on survey topics
3. ESSA [Committee of Practitioners](#) to meet **November 30**

From the U.S. Department of Education

4. USED shares resources on [diversity](#), inclusion, safe schools
5. USED issues guidance on fiscal changes, equitable-services requirements under [ESSA](#)

From other state agencies

6. Governor's Workforce Board seeks applicants for grants to develop non-trade [apprenticeship programs](#)

Action Item Calendar

December 9 – [Textbook](#)-verification forms due

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. Education Secretary King urges states to end use of corporal punishment in schools

U.S. Education Secretary John B. King Jr. sent a [letter](#) on Wednesday urging state leaders to end the use of corporal punishment in schools, a practice repeatedly linked to harmful short-term and long-term outcomes for students. The letter reads in part:

Our schools are bound by a sacred trust to safeguard the well-being, safety, and extraordinary potential of the children and youth within the communities they serve. While some may argue that corporal punishment is a tradition in some school communities, society has evolved and past practice alone is no justification. No school can be considered safe or supportive if its students are fearful of being physically punished. We strongly urge states to eliminate the use of corporal punishment in schools— a practice that educators, civil rights advocates, medical professionals, and researchers agree is harmful to students and which the data show us unequivocally disproportionately impacts students of color and students with disabilities.

Rhode Island bans the use of corporal punishment in schools and educational programs. (Physical Restraint Regulations 3.6)

From RIDE

2. RIDE to survey students, staff, families during current school year; RIDE seeks input from teachers on survey topics

We are pleased to announce that SurveyWorks will be administered to students, staff, and families across Rhode Island during the current school year. This year, RIDE has formed a partnership with Panorama Education to plan, administer, and collect feedback data. Panorama Education is a Boston-based education-technology company that works with 45 states, more than 7,000 schools, and 300 districts across the country. The Panorama platform and services enable state and LEA partners to administer research-backed surveys and to collect valuable feedback data, offering opportunities for interacting with online reporting, tracking change over time, and using feedback to inform school improvement. You can [experience Panorama's feedback and reporting tools](#).

We are in the process of gathering information about what teachers think should be included in our upcoming SurveyWorks initiative. We are interested in tailoring SurveyWorks to meet our needs. Panorama organizes its surveys around topics. As such, the link below asks *teachers* to rate their five highest-priority topics (i.e., what is most important to you). This poll is quick, and all answers are anonymous. We appreciate teacher feedback.

Teacher Content Poll:

<https://surveys.panoramaed.com/ride/9631639893/surveys>

If you have any questions or concerns about this poll, please don't hesitate to email EdEval@ride.ri.gov.

Stay tuned for additional information about SurveyWorks in the weeks to come. For more information about SurveyWorks, email Peg Votta, at Margaret.votta@ride.ri.gov, or Mike Ferry, at Michael.ferry@ride.ri.gov.

3. ESSA Committee of Practitioners to meet November 30

The R.I. Committee of Practitioners, which is providing RIDE with guidance and feedback as the RIDE staff develops the Rhode Island plan for transition to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), will hold its fifth meeting on Wednesday, **November 30**, from 4 – 6 p.m., at the United Way of Rhode Island, 50 Valley St., Providence.

The newly enacted ESSA provides Rhode Island an opportunity for innovation and flexibility in a number of key areas, including academic standards, accountability, support for school improvement, student and educator support, and use of federal education funds. The Committee meets monthly in order to review any proposed state rule or regulation relating to the implementation of ESSA. All Committee meetings are open to the public.

From the U.S. Department of Education (USED)

4. USED shares resources on diversity, inclusion, safe schools

Please see this message from Education Secretary John B. King, Jr.:

[Last Friday] the USED joined an event at the White House to both reflect on the Obama Administration's ongoing efforts to advance diversity and inclusion as well as explore the ways in which we

may continue to further those efforts together. That event built on a number of ongoing efforts. Last winter, I joined with former Secretary Arne Duncan to release a [joint letter](#), which issued a “call to action” and provided a list of resources designed to help ensure that our schools and institutions are places where all students feel safe and welcome. As we released a new report Friday entitled “[Advancing Diversity & Inclusion in Higher Education](#),” we also wanted to share with you again the information and resources contained in that joint letter. In particular, I want to highlight resources that are included in the Addendum to the letter for your use as we continue to work together to ensure that all schools and institutions are environments conducive to learning.

Thank you for your continued partnership in this work and for your continued leadership in supporting all of our students.

Resources to assist school officials, educators, students, families, and communities in promoting more positive school climates include:

- The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, safesupportivelearning.ed.gov, offers tools, training, and technical assistance to schools, institutions of higher education, families, and communities to contend with many factors that affect the conditions for learning and impede the building and maintenance of safe and supportive learning environments, such as bullying, harassment, and violence;
- StopBullying.gov, www.stopbullying.gov, serves as a clearinghouse for all Federal anti-bullying resources and information about State laws and model policies to stop bullying and protect children; and

- The USED has collected resources for immigrants, refugees, asylees, and other new Americans at www.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/immigration-resources.html.

Additional resources about bullying and harassment of students on the basis of race, religion, and national origin include:

- U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, *Twenty Plus Things Schools Can Do to Respond to or Prevent Hate Incidents Against Arab-Americans, Muslims, and Sikhs*, www.justice.gov/crs/pubs/20-plus-things.pdf;
- U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, *Checklist for a Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Harassment*, www.ed.gov/ocr/checklist.html;
- New York Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, *Anti-Bullying Instructional Resources*, otda.ny.gov/programs/bria/documents/WtOS-Anti-Bullying-Resource.pdf; and
- U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, *Programs for Managing School Multicultural Conflict*, www.justice.gov/crs/pubs/school-multicultural-conflict.pdf.

Federal resources describing students' rights and schools' obligations under Federal laws addressing bullying and harassment on the basis of race, religion, and national origin include:

- U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, *Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying* (Oct. 26, 2010), www.ed.gov/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.pdf;

- U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, *Dear Colleague Letter: First Amendment* (July 28, 2003), www.ed.gov/ocr/firstamend.html;
- U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, *Investigative Guidance: Racial Incidents and Harassment Against Students at Educational Institutions* (Mar. 10, 1994), www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/race394.html;
- U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Federal Protections Against National Origin Discrimination* (Aug. 2010), www.justice.gov/crt/publications/natorigin2.pdf;
- U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Protecting the Religious Freedom of All: Federal Laws Against Religious Discrimination* (Aug. 2015), www.justice.gov/crt/combating-religious-discrimination-and-protecting-religious-freedom-10; and
- U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Harassment Fact Sheet*, www.justice.gov/crt/about/edu/documents/eosaapimassa.pdf.

Some of the resources above are available in other languages:

- U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights offers many of its resources in other languages at www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/howto-index.html;
- U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Federal Protections Against National Origin Discrimination* (Aug. 2010) is available in several languages at <http://www.justice.gov/crt/publications>;

- U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Harassment Fact Sheet* is available in Punjabi at www.justice.gov/crt/about/edu/documents/eosaapimassapunjabi.pdf; and
- The White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and its partners have translated basic information from StopBullying.gov into several AAPI languages at <https://acttochange.org/#resources>.

5. USED issues guidance on fiscal changes, equitable-services requirements under ESSA

On Monday, the USED released [guidance](#) for fiscal changes and equitable services requirements under the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA).

The guidance highlights changes to: Title I, Part A within-state allocations; Title I within-district allocations; Title II, Part A allocations; maintenance of effort requirements; and transferability requirements. The ESSA also makes a number of changes to the equitable-services requirements for private school students in Title I and Title VIII. This document discusses these specific changes and is designed to support states, districts, and schools in implementing ESSA.

From other state agencies

6. Governor's Workforce Board seeks applicants for grants to develop non-trade apprenticeship programs

The Governor's Workforce Board has released and posted the Fiscal Year 2017 Non-Trade Registered Apprenticeship Development Request

for Proposals (RFP). The Board is seeking applicants for small grants of up to \$25,000 for the development of non-trade apprenticeship programs

The funds may be used to develop new, non-traditional apprenticeship programs in high-growth, high-demand fields. Applications must include a sponsor (employer) and an education and training partner (school or community-based organization).

The funds may also be used to write complete curriculum and to design an on-the-job training curriculum.

The RFP is posted [here](#).

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/FieldMemos.aspx>